

Hillandale

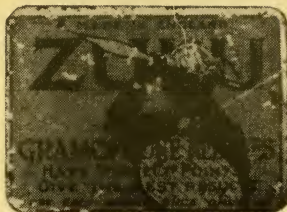


Journal of the
City of London
Phonograph and
Gramophone Society

THE HILLANDALE NEWS

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"Good morning. I'm from the
Performing Right Society."

= N E E D L E T I N S =

This month's front and back covers show some photographs of needle tins sent in by Ruth Lambert, following the report of her talk at Bloomsbury in April, which appeared in the June issue.

FRONT COVER:

On the top row, left and right, are two anonymous early tins using the nightingale theme familiar from the well-known Songster tins. That on the right comes from Redditch, centre of the British needle industry, but that on the left gives no indication of its origin. In the centre is a 'Wellington' tin, presumably marketed by L.E.Jaccard of London, whose trade-mark this was.

In the centre of the bottom row is the Zulu tin referred to in the April meeting report, which probably dates from before the First War. The John Bull tin on the left is probably not much later, as is the Decca tin on the right: the Decca gramophone appeared in the summer of 1914, and the lady's dress would have been very outmoded by 1920. Interestingly, a degree of artistic licence has made the cubic shape of the Decca less cumbersome looking (the original Deccas are, for all their portability, actually very awkward to carry about).

BACK COVER:

The All-U-NEED tin went under the Guardsman brand-name, and is unusual in holding 900 needles and in illustrating them on the lid. The Embassy Gramotube is in green and white, but variations are known. Presumably, this was Woolworth's answer to the Pyramid. The 3-tone Embassy tin is very unusual. Did the tin with 300 needles cost 6d?

The Zonophone Tungstyle-type tin is another unexplained oddity - an export version perhaps, or maybe one that was abandoned shortly after its introduction. It is likely that it would not have survived the Zonophone merger with Regal of 1933, and might have been introduced shortly before then. The Sovereign Trutone is another mystery of the 1930s. The profile depicted looks remarkably like that of George V, who died in 1936. But the use of a Sovereign's head, even a recently-deceased Sovereign, would surely have needed some very special string-pulling at St.James's, and would a gramophone needle manufacturer have carried much weight in such quarters?

E D I S O N M A C H I N E S I N F R A N C E

On the inside back cover are some engravings of Edison phonographs taken from a 1906 French catalogue. This was really a cylinder catalogue, with the machines appearing on the cover and frontispiece. Another copy of the same (1906) cylinder catalogue from the same source had different machine illustrations (half-tone rather than steel engraving), and showed the Gem in its more familiar form. The cover also incorporated a dealer's name, and it seems that the cover varied from dealer to dealer. The curious wood-cased Gem may therefore have been peculiar to the dealer who issued this catalogue. Could one of our French members elaborate on this, perhaps?

Chat from Down Under

John Hanna

It is fairly common knowledge that during the first six years of commercial electrical recording both the Gramophone Co. and English Columbia (together with their American equivalents) used the Western Electric recording system. One disadvantage of this system - as far as the recording companies were concerned - was that it involved the payment of licence fees. Eventually, Alan Blumlein of Columbia developed an improved method of recording which did not infringe the Western Electric patents. Recordings made by the new system were denoted by the addition of a "C" prefix to the matrix number on Columbia, whereas the Gramophone Co. used a swastika or, later, a square following the matrix number. I had always imagined that when the Blumlein process was put into service in late 1931, use of the Western Electric method was discontinued. I thus experienced a surprise when cataloguing a recent addition to the collection (Columbia DB 1007 "Beautiful Spring Waltz" and "The Grasshoppers' Dance", played by the Regal Virtuosi). Matrix numbers are WA 12672-2 and WA 13939-1, which indicate recording dates in approximately May 1932 and September 1933 respectively, yet the prefix identifies Western Electric recording! My first inclination was that the "W" prefix was a mistake. That theory gained no support from the fact that my only other Regal Virtuosi disc, Regal Zonophone G 21522 ("La Paloma" and "Nola"), displays matrix numbers WA 12671 and WA 12827-1 (recorded, it would seem, in May and June 1932 respectively). The explanation for the use of the Western Electric process has something to do with the fact that the recordings were made in the Regal Cinema, London. They were presumably made via a mobile recording van which may not at that stage have been converted to the new process. That, of course, is no more than speculation, but someone may be aware of the actual circumstances.

The mention of various processes of electrical recording brings to mind how little appears to be known of acoustic recording techniques. Differences in method are audible when listening to a random selection of acoustic records but it is difficult to account for the varying tonal qualities in anything but general terms. Generalities do not, however, adequately explain the changed sound of the Gramophone Company's recordings upon the introduction of a new recording process in March 1923 (at which time the Company also implemented a new series of double-letter-prefix matrix numbers of the form Cc, Yy, etc.) The discs made by the new process were occasionally "wooden" or "boxy" in quality but in the vast majority of instances they were fine specimens of acoustic recording. Columbia also appears to have commenced the use of a different recording method on or about the time of the introduction of its AX and A prefixed matrix series in May 1923 but the results tend to be quite disappointing, lacking clarity and incisiveness. In contrast, the quality of many Columbia discs made just a year or two earlier is superb. It is difficult to understand how the new sound was ever considered acceptable, as it is not impressive even when the records are played on machines of the period.

Orville Harold

by F. Traynor

The lure of tracking down and collecting early records provides a fascinating and rewarding hobby for the dedicated and resourceful individual, but it is my experience that a great many young and often not so young collectors concentrate their efforts on the search for famous artists and rare recordings. This is unfortunate for two reasons; obviously the number of available recordings is finite and so for all but the lucky few the search must end in disappointment, but also in this single-minded pursuit of the 'unattainable' these collectors overlook the work of the less well-known artists, among whose ranks are to be found many fine performers. A case in point is that of the American tenor Orville Harold. Perhaps a little insight on his career and achievements may spark more interest in this excellent artist and those like him who languish forgotten and unknown.

He was born in Muncie, Indiana in 1876 and as a child he studied the violin and sang solo in church choirs throughout the Middle West of America. He was discovered singing in vaudeville in New York by the impresario Oscar Hammerstein, who, recognising his potential and as always on the lookout for new talent, advised Harold to forgo the pleasures of the music hall stage in order to study for a career in grand opera. After a period of study under Oscar Saenger, he made his debut as Canio in *Pagliacci* at the Manhattan Opera, then following several engagements in Paris he was chosen for leading tenor in Hammerstein's new opera house in London. He quickly won acclaim in the role of Arnold in Rossini's *William Tell* and followed this success with well-received appearances in *Rigoletto*, *Faust* and *Romeo and Juliette* and soon became with the great French baritone Renaud, a star attraction for the opera-goers of the time.

On his return to the U.S.A., he gave an extensive series of concerts in all the major cities where he met with much success, but as with all other aspiring singers his sights were set firmly upon the Metropolitan Opera House. Appearing as Leopold opposite Ponsell singing the role of Rachel in a performance of Halevy's *La Juive*, he was warmly greeted by the Metropolitan audience and from this introduction he went on to give many more impressive performances for several seasons, partnering some of the greatest singers of his day and more than holding his own with the best of them. At that time the star-studded casts included names such as Farrar, Whitehill, Alda, Bori, Jeritza, Didur and Chaliapin. Harold's fine lyric tenor and his manly appearance were ideally suited to the role of hero in the Wagner operas, particularly those of *Lohengrin* and *Parsifal* and he became very much the favourite with audiences at that time.

Fortunately Harold made quite a number of recordings on three different labels: Columbia, Victor and Edison. The Victor of Rudolph's aria from *La Boheme* is considered by many to be one of the best versions ever recorded, and is often held as a model of great singing. For myself, ever faithful to Edison, my favourites are Blue Amberols where the effort of winding up is amply rewarded when that glorious voice emerges proudly from the horn. There is a fine version of 'Spirito Gentil' from *La Favorita* in English, and a number of ballads. Three of these, 'I Hear You Calling Me', 'Snowy Breasted Pearl' and 'Come Back to Erin' are more usually associated with

John McCormack and while it would be difficult to rival the standard he set, Harrold's versions are excellent and well worth acquiring. The rarest of the Blue Amberols is a song 'The Secret', which must have had a very short catalogue life as it seldom surfaces, and so remains the only gap in my collection.

Although Harrold enjoyed a critically and popularly acclaimed career, he is nowadays consigned to near obscurity and it would be unfortunate if the collector in his urge to seek out only the rare or historic were to continue to overlook artists of such quality. Collectors would be well advised to secure any of Harrold's cylinders or discs they may come across, for it will prove a most rewarding experience, and who can say when that elusive G & T will come to hand?

Correspondence

Ipswich, Suffolk

Dear Sir,

Do you think that your readers could answer two or three unrelated and elementary questions for a new and ignorant collector?

- 1) Many of the records I buy are very dirty and gritty. Can anyone suggest an effective and safe way of cleaning them?
- 2) Why is it that many of my records, which sound perfect when played with a steel needle, develop a disproportionate and intrusive surface noise when played electrically with my Shure M75 cartridge, whose factory-made stylus is presumably designed for the purpose. Could this be dirt in the grooves?
- 3) Linked to this, I have noticed that my early electric Columbias seem to have much quieter surfaces than their HMV counterparts. I am intrigued to know whether this is coincidence or whether it can be explained.

I realise that these are elementary questions, but I am sure I am not the only recent "convert" who reads Hillandale and could use such practical advice.

On TV we are always seeing advertisements for re-run magazines on all subjects; may I suggest that you re-run articles from earlier Hillandales ... say one per issue? Us newer and younger members seem to have missed much!

Yours sincerely, Mike Brown

Early electric (and late acoustic) Columbias did indeed have a 'silent' surface on their laminated construction which seems not to have been attainable on 'solid stock' shellac records such as those of HMV. The process was dropped in this country after the EMI merger, but in Australia the existing Columbia plant remained in use and HMV records were pressed there with the Columbia silent surface. Never turn away an Australian HMV pressing of this type!

I will leave readers more qualified than I to answer Mr. Brown's first two questions, but I would like to thank him for raising them and thus airing the subjects. The next issue of the

magazine may contain some reprinted articles of yesteryear, in celebration of the first twenty-five years of HILLANDALE NEWS. In general, however, I do not believe in repeating material partly because many, possibly most, readers will have seen it already and partly because there is a great stack of past issues of the magazine chez Dave Roberts and he is very keen for Members to buy them. Reprinting articles that are still available in their original form seems to be a less than totally efficient use of page-space! - Ed.

On the subject of the October Silver Jubilee issue, I would like to invite Members who can remember that far back to contribute short articles recalling the early days of the magazine, the Society's activities in the 1960s, or the personalities involved in running those activities then - or anything else on broadly similar lines. Does anyone have a photograph of Bob Wormald, who founded the HILLANDALE NEWS back in 1960?

Stockport, Cheshire

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

As a "Movie Buff" I have followed the History of cinema sound over many years and my brother George was a sound engineer at various film studios around London, working on films for over fifty years.

He knew the various recording companies well and told me that when electrical recording came in the old acoustic machines were used at first, with electrical cutters. This didn't last long and when the new Western Electric machines were supplied the acoustic machines were broken up for scrap.

The famous HMV outside recording van which recorded Ernest Lough in 'Hear My Prayer' was used many times at the film studios for singing stars like Gracie Fields, who could not get to Abbey Road because of tight film schedules. Eventually this van had the works taken out and it was sold off as a tea and sandwich truck, after being left to decay for a while in the grounds at Abbey Road.

I found MR. G.W.Taylor's 'Vitaphone' article very interesting, as I saw the early developments in cine sound when I used to visit my brother at the studios in those days. When he showed me at that time a strip of 'Movietone' film with the sound on the edge of the film, everyone knew this was the movie for the future.

Projectionists in those days would receive films to show with half the sound on film and half on disc, also other mix-ups. Exciting times, all right.

In 1929 Al Jolson made a film called 'Mammy', which was photographed over ten reels and recorded on Vitaphone discs. I have half of these discs in my possession; they are 12 inches in diameter and run at $33\frac{1}{3}$, with standard 78 groove cut. They are fairly heavy records, nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick. They were pressed by Columbia for Warner Bros and each one runs for eleven minutes.

For Reels 5,6,7 & 8 two double-sided records are used, but strangely enough Reels 9 and 10 each have a single-sided disc. There are threatening notices on each side about fines for damage while at the cinema.

Best Wishes, Harold Moss

Dear Christopher,

Columbia Prefixes

With reference to the above in issues 143 and 144 of Hillandale, I have carried out some research since my original contribution in 143. The facts appear to be that Columbia records issued on the March and Mid-March supplements (and some on the April supplement) in 1930 were originally allocated the following catalogue numbers: LBX1 to LBX3 and LX 4 to LX 10; PB 1; DBX1 to DBX15, and DX 16 to DX26: DBB1 to DBB 19 (I cannot say whether or not 20 to 24 were prefixed originally as DBB or simply as DB) and DB25 to DB 41: CB1 to CB 27.

Only LBX1 to LBX3 and DBX1 and DBX2 and DBX7 to DBX 15 are known to me as having been advertised with the intrusive 'B' in the prefixes. Needless to say, that type of prefix did not appear in the complete catalogue.

3-o'clock Letters on Gramophone Company Records

These letters indicate the sequence of daughter/pressing matrices which produced the discs sold in the shops. The sequence of letters was G-R-A-M-O-P-H-L-T. After 'T' the next daughter matrix was 'GD', then G was placed before all the single letters for a second time round, so that when 'GT' was procured 19 different pressing matrices had been in use (and a rev counter and wooden gear-knob were standard). The next matrix was marked 'RD' followed by 'RG' and then through all the single letters again prefixed with an R.

Frank Andrews

Dear Christopher.

Maidenhead, Berks

Referring to the query raised by Michael Walters in Hillandale No. 144, it has always been my understanding that, for the purpose of identifying stampers, the Gramophone Company used, sequentially, the letters GRAMOPHLT, whereas the Decca company had a similar scheme based on the word BUCKINGHAM.

Ken Loughland

Dear Mr. Proudfoot,

Hereford

I am sure that the majority of our members will be familiar with the story of Fred Gaisberg's successful persuasion of Adelina Patti to record her voice for posterity. The first records were made in Patti's castle of Craig y Nos, South Wales, in December 1905; together with Gaisberg's account they form a unique place in the history of the gramophone.

After her death, Craig y Nos was as a geriatric hospital, but this is now being phased out with the building of new premises on a more convenient site. The future of Madame Patti's home and the small but fully equipped opera house she built there is now uncertain as the property will probably be sold. One proposal has been that the theatre could be used as a discotheque, but more promising is a project to turn the house into a cultural centre, in which the theatre would be preserved. I will watch developments and keep you informed.

Lawrie Wilson.

GENUINE Edison Bell Records.

PART 3

by Frank Andrews

A new customer for contract work in 1928 was Witton, Witton & Co., a firm which sold its own brands of pianos and gramophones and began issuing its Witton Records in November. These were 12 inches, and all were special recordings of a singer who was claimed to be a second Caruso; Antonio Notariello, of the Rome, Milan and Naples opera houses. Six discs were on offer at 5s.0d. each. The labels were green and white.

EDIBEL SOUND FILM APPARATUS LTD.

A new associated company, Edibel Sound Film Apparatus Ltd., was founded on July 5th 1929. This was capitalised with an offer of one million two-shilling shares, based on agreements with Edison Bell Ltd., who were to manufacture disc records suitable for synchronisation with the motion picture films as used in VisionTune projectors. World rights were also obtained in apparatus, to be supplied by Edison Bell Ltd., for a contract entered into with Morgan Film Service (1928) Ltd. for the sale of 500 Edibel Sound Film Apparatus projectors for theatres and cinemas. Edibel was founded by Keith Jones, of Keith Prowse, and H.M.Loine of Edison Bell. The Vision-Tone instruments had been demonstrated at Grosvenor House, Park Lane on July 24th by Sir Cecil T.Beck, a director of the Aldwych Advertising Co. Ltd., at which Baird Television Ltd. had been an involved participant.

With the formation of the American Record Corporation in America in October 1929 (in which the English Crystalate business took a third interest), Edison Bell ceased receiving Banner, Paramount and Regal 'mothers', but found another matrix source in the Crown label of the U.S.A. Edison Bell International matrices also began to be used by Edison Bell Ltd. The 10-inch Electron records had their final supplement in November 1929. More business came to Edibel in February 1930 with an agreement to supply Anglo-European Sound Films Ltd. The company is known also to have supplied 16-inch records for Pathe's News films. In 1929, George Ison was replaced as Musical Director of Edison Bell Ltd. by Orazio Fagotti, a cellist. He held the post until 1932.

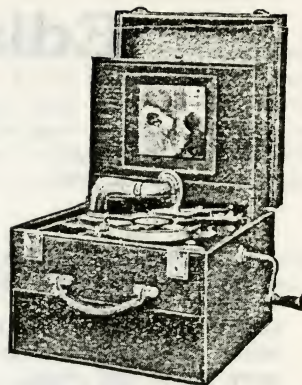
LONG PLAYING EDISON BELL WINNERS

This type of Winner was introduced in June 1930 and was made possible by reducing the size of the label and taking the recording nearer to the spindle hole. These new Edison Bell Winner labels were printed in black on gold. Three months later the surviving 12-inch Electrons were reduced in price to 4s.0d. and finally ceased with the November issues. Nearly 370 different Electrons had been on offer over a three-and-a-half year period.

Edison Bell Ltd. were now committed mostly to the popular repertoire in recording. For Christmas 1930 its Radio records were reduced to 1s.0d. each a special Edison Bell Souvenir Record, with gold and black label, was issued in the 10-inch size, recorded by Harry Bluff and Albert Pearce, two artists who recorded in the earlier years on Edison Bell and London Phonograph cylinders.

EDISON BELL PICTUREGRAM

The story lives as the pictures appear to the words—changing from scene to scene—event upon event—while a clear voice tells the thrilling tale.



*Pictures unfold
as the Story is told*

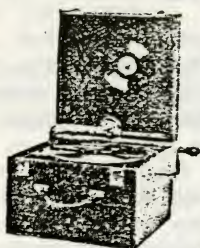
A DELIGHT FOR YOUNGSTERS AND GROWN-UPS.

Here is a novel machine that will delight the hearts of young and old alike—the Edison Bell Picturegram—a gramophone that illustrates by coloured moving pictures the spoken words of the records.

The picture mechanism is detachable and when not in use fits into a special compartment—and the machine is then converted into a neat portable gramophone capable of playing any 10-inch records.

The Edison Bell Picturegram is sold complete with three double-sided records by the famous child impersonator and well-known broadcast artist, Mr. Harry Hemsley, and three double-sided rolls of pictures, beautifully reproduced in six colours and averaging 24 pictures each. **£6:6:0**

A variety of subjects will be listed from time to time including Fairy Stories, Nursery Rhymes, Educational Subjects, etc.



Used as an ordinary portable Gramophone with its Record Storage room, it is ideal for anywhere at any time.

EDISON BELL LIMITED,
LONDON, S.E.15.

January, 1928.

The Edison Bell Winner records with large red labels were reduced to 1s.6d. in February 1931 and the long playing Edison Bell Winners were given an 'L' prefix to their catalogue numbers. On reaching 4999 in the previous year, these had jumped to 5101. In April 1931 the red labels were made Edison Bell Winner long playing records, except for some from foreign masters, so that all Winners were then long playing. The red-labelled discs remained at 1s.6d. At about this time, some Edison Bell matrices were in use to produce some Mayfair records, given away for gift coupons of the Ardath Tobacco Company.

EDISON BELL: THE BEGINNING OF THE END

The world financial crisis was having its affect on the talking machine industry and the Edison Bell companies were some of those to be most adversely affected. Edibel Sound Film Apparatus had been failing and were petitioned into a compulsory winding up in July 1931. Edison Bell Ltd. showed a net loss of £59,423 at the year ending on September 30th, and Edison Bell International had a loss of £31,745.

The Radio label was changed from blue and gold to gold and black in September 1931. Some unusual discs made from Edison Bell masters at this time, or perhaps a little later, were those which carried a large picture beneath a clear plastic surface, almost to the outer edge of the record. They were not made for the Picture Gramophone Record Company, as that company had failed before the Edison Bell matrices had been recorded. It is not known for whom these highly coloured records were made by Edison Bell.

In an effort to increase sales, H.M.Lemoine, one of Edison Bell's directors, began broadcasting and presenting Winner and Radio records from Radio Paris and Radio Normandy from February 1932. Two months later the Midland Bank appointed a Receiver and Manager to Edison Bell Ltd. with a reorganisation and reconstruction of the business to be undertaken without delay. One of the immediate effects was the demise of the Radio record after a mid-May supplement.

The International company were at that time recording in Denmark and Sweden and had other expeditions arranged.

On May 30th 1932 Boosey and Hawkes, the music publishers, petitioned to have Edison Bell wound up but, because there was the possibility of reconstruction, Mr. Justice Eve delayed judgement for four weeks. A meeting of the company on July 2nd resolved to reconstruct as a new company, to be called Edison Bell (1932) Ltd., capitalised at £230,000. A creditors' meeting on the 8th approved the resolution and the court put back judgement on Boosey & Hawkes' petition to October 31st 1932.

However, the Edison Bell (1932) Ltd. scheme did not proceed. A fresh effort was made to reconstruct and amalgamate with another company, Electrical & Radio Products (1931) Ltd., of London and Surrey. This had the approval of the court. To allow for this Boosey & Hawkes' petition had its judgement put back yet again, to January 12th 1933. This attempt at reconstruction also failed and Boosey & Hawkes were granted their petition for the compulsory winding up of Edison Bell Ltd. in January 1933. This proved to be a long drawn-out task, which the official liquidator



Principal Melodies from the Stupendous Musical Play now Successfully Running at Theatre Royal, Drury Lane

(Sung in German, with Orchestral Accompaniment)

Conductor: Fr. Loschelder

PETER BAUST (Tenor) and
LÉONIE BURGERSTEIN (Soprano)

*5278 { Love, what has given you this Magic Pow'r? Duet
(Patiently Smiling Peter Baust (Tenor) Song

*5277 { A Cup of Tea with You Duet
You are my Heart's Delight Peter Baust (Tenor) Song

LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA

Conductor: Orazio Fagotti (Sung in English)
STILES ALLEN (Soprano) and RICHARD
TERELLI (Tenor)

5278 { Love, what has given you this Magic Pow'r? Duet
Beneath the Window of my Love Richard Terelli (Tenor)

RICHARD TERELLI (Tenor)

5280 { Patiently Smiling Aria
You are my Heart's Delight Aria

Edison Bell
WINNER RECORDS 1/6
(Red-Label Series)  Price - - 1/6

Except those marked
(*) all these latest
WINNER Records
bear the small
"Long-playing" Labels

All the popular Airs from the Great Spectacular Musical Production at the Coliseum, London

ROLANDO AND HIS BLUE SALON
ORCHESTRA

5265 { Your Eyes Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain
My Song of Love Waltz, Vocal Refrain

5273 { Good-Bye Vocal Refrain
It would be Wonderful Vocal Refrain

GRETA HOFFMAN (Soprano)

Accompanied by LONDON CONCERT
ORCHESTRA, Conductor: Orazio Fagotti

5279 { In Balkammergut Song
White Horse Inn Song

GRETA HOFFMAN, RICHARD TERELLI.
(Soprano) (Tenor)

KATE MULLER, HENRY UPSTON
(Contralto) (Baritone)

5281 { Vocal Excerpts - "White Horse Inn"
In Two Parts

Few musical plays of modern times have
received such unanimous praise from the
critics as Erik Charell's "White Horse Inn."
and in the above titles we present the leading
melodies.



EDISON BELL LTD., London, S.E.15 CHROMIC NEEDLES Run in a Groove but are Out of the Rut

June, 1931

did not complete until 1937.

One of the Receiver's first actions was to offer the business for sale by tender on October 31st 1932. All tenders had to be in by January 12th 1933, and the decision on them was to be made on January 20th.

In the meanwhile a rumour circulated that a company was to be formed, in close collaboration with the film industry, to manufacture records which were to carry mementos of sound films, and that the Edison Bell works might be purchased for that purpose. This did not happen, and as a matter of fact, no satisfactory offer was made for the whole business. Various offers were therefore accepted for various parts of the assets which had been valued at £200,000 in the previous September. About a quarter of this was expected to be realised.

The receiver's report of February 25th 1933 stated that the failure of the business was due to (1) a general falling off in demand for its products: (2) the failure of subsidiaries to pay for goods supplied: (3) the radio receiver business was under-developed through lack of capital: (4) the competition from 'Boom' companies since gone into liquidation: and (5) the competition of the 6d. 8-inch Eclipse record from Crystalate which affected the sales of the Winner and Radio records. There was a total deficiency of £370,000. By March 1933 it was known that the London Edison Bell works and some undertakings had been purchased by a company called The New London Electron Works Ltd., or by its directors, with the future conduct of the business to be decided. Only the records and radio receiver businesses had been acquired; this was thus the sixth company to control Edison Bell records.

By April 1st, the associated company of Geo. Cohen, Sons & Co. Ltd. of Commercial Road, had taken over from New London Electron and thus became the seventh company to own the records.

The Winners had been kept in production and were still being advertised from Radio Paris but the Cohen company owned them for only five weeks before they were passed to Mr. Howard Flynn, the composer, orchestral conductor and dance band leader, who had worked in the Edison Bell studios as a musical arranger. It was during the first week in May 1933 that Flynn signed his agreement giving him the right to exploit the Edison Bell name anywhere in the world. On May 12th. Sound Developments Ltd. was registered with a capital of £100 and took over Flynn's agreement: the eighth company to own Edison Bell records. Thomas Hough joined Flynn on the board of directors and Harold Hough became the company secretary. The Registered Office, at first, was at Flynn's home address in the N.W.1 area, but it soon moved to Rosebery when the company acquired premises there and the name was changed to Edison Bell (1933) Ltd.

It had cost Flynn £3,300 to buy the goodwill and rights to the Edison Bell trade marks, designs and contracts, along with certain items of machinery and certain gramophone record matrices. Edison Bell (1933) Ltd's business, initially, was to carry on with portable gramophones, gramophone needles and gramophone records, which were to be pressed at the New Malden works of the Decca Record company. As for the former Edison Bell works at Huntingdon, with its plant and machinery including seventy-five presses, that had been put up for sale by auction on June 13th 1933.

Under the short proprietorship of the Sound Development Co. Ltd. only ten Winners (with red labels) were issued: with the change of name to Edison Bell (1933)

A REAL "WINNER" AT LAST!



The Edison Bell 1/- Record — a knockout !

Never before has there been such a galaxy of talent for every taste at a price within everyone's means. Only the most modern manufacturing plant and methods, coupled with a scrupulous regard for detail, have enabled Edison Bell to produce this wonderful "Winner" record.

MAURICE WINNICK & HIS ORCHESTRA

I cover the waterfront—Roll up the carpet W.1.

Popular Song Medley: Intro: If I had somebody to love; Don't blame me; In the valley of the moon; Lazy bones; Trouble in paradise; I like to go back in the evening W.2.

TOMMY KINSMAN & HIS BAND

at the Princes Golden Brasserie
Learn to croon—Whistling under the moon W.3.

I found the right girl—Peter, Peter W.4.

BILLY MERRIN & HIS COMMANDERS

In a little second-hand store—Ding dong ding W.5.

I like to go back in the evening—If you'll say "Yes," cherie W.6.

THE BAND OF H.M. LIFE GUARDS

The whistler and his dog—The policeman's holiday W.14.

ANNETTE HANSHAW

Don't blame me—It's the talk of the town W.20

THE FAMOUS ST. HILDA'S BAND

(a) Denton Park "Now to the Lord"

(b) Praise "Praise ye the Lord" (a) Ilkley

"Grace! 'Tis a charming sound"

(b) Grace "Awake my soul in joyful days" W.9.

BOBBY BROWN & HIS ACCORDION BAND

Sweet dreams, pretty lady—Mademoiselle W.10.

In the valley of the moon—There's a cabin in the pines W.11.

HARRY WILSON & HIS ORCHESTRA

Lazy Bones—Reflections in the water W.19.

THE SELECTA PLECTRUM ORCHESTRA

The Blue Danube Waltz—The Skaters Waltz W.12.

THE COMMODORE GRANT ORCHESTRA

The Grasshoppers dance—The two guitars W.18

BUDDY BRADLEY & HIS RHYTHM KINGS

Sweetheart darlin'—Love songs of the Nile W.7.

Trouble in Paradise—Don't blame me W.8.

TESSIE O'SHEA (Comedienne)

U-ra-li-a-to-ay—You're getting older— W.15.

EMILIO COLOMBO

Serenata Op. 6 (Toselli)—Le Canari (The Canary) W.17

THE BOY SINGER

The hymn that I sang as a boy—The vine covered church 'way back home W.13.

TEX RITTER

Rye whiskey, rye whiskey—Goodbye old paint W.21

Edison Bell

"WINNER" RECORDS

10 inch
BLACK LABEL



Ltd., the labels were changed to black on gold and the catalogue numbers were given side prefixes of 'A' and 'B' from No. 5563.

Edison Bell International was still operating as an independent company at this time. The Edison Bell works at Camberwell and Peckham had ceased production and were closed, having been on offer for purchase since June 17th 1933. The works included practically everything necessary for the manufacture of records - studios, musical instruments, recording machines, Ebonitis materials, rolling mills, presses and so forth.

EDISON BELL RECORDS AND EDISON BELL WINNERS

It was in the second week of August that the Winner label was changed from red to gold and black. Costing 1s.6d., supplies were immediately available with the company hoping to issue twelve discs per month. But the Winner name was to be with the Edison Bell company for only another two months as, from October 7th 1933, the Decca Record Co. Ltd., as sole concessionaires for Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. began issuing a series of discs which they called the Edison Bell Winner. Catalogue numbers started at W.1. These were pressed by Decca from their own matrix stock, and were given black labels printed in gold and sold for just one shilling. At the same time, Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. changed its label from Edison Bell Winner to Edison Bell Record, still at 1s.6d. and with gold and black labels which continued the Winner catalogue number series, at number 5604.

Record labels at this time were carrying the prohibition of public performance legends even though Phonographic Performances Ltd. had not then been founded. That company was established in May 1934, with Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. a participating member. The Winner Record Co. Ltd. (which appears to have done no business nor advertised since 1917) was struck from Companies House register of joint stock companies in February 1934. It is thought that it was about this time that records were being made for Peacocks Stores, with mid-blue labels printed in silver and showing a peacock. Some of them were pressed from Edison Bell matrices.

In October 1934 Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. borrowed £530 creating mortgage debentures, but with the record business failing to establish itself the last Edison Bell record, No. 5692, was issued on their last supplement in December 1934.

In January 1935 came the last of Decca's Edison Bell Winners, numbered W.166. An Edison Bell record no. W.1025 has been seen, probably from an export series, which also appeared as Octacros 1097. Later, Edison Bell matrices were found to circulate on other makes of disc, some on the later Hudson Records which were first sold in June 1934.

In December 1934 it had been announced that Edison Bell Holdings Ltd. was to be founded with a £200,000 share capital to acquire Edison Bell (1933) Ltd., with a subsidiary to be formed which would be called Edison Bell Electric Ltd. The shareholders in Edison Bell International Ltd., which had borrowed £11,250 the previous October, were to have preferential consideration in this new company which, among other things, was to exploit an invention of Prof. A.M.Low, the Visiogram. These proposals never materialised and Edison Bell (1933) continued in business although with no new recordings, most of its income being derived from royalties through membership of Phonographic Performances Ltd.

THE NOVELTY RECORD OF THE SEASON

J. H. SQUIRE CELESTE OCTET

- 5414 | Les Millions d'Arléquin ... Instrumental
| Maïre, My Girl ... Instrumental

STILES ALLEN (Soprano)

(With Orchestral Accompaniment)

- 5406 | Vissi d'Arte ... Aria, in Italian
| Musetta's Waltz Song ... Aria, in English

THE MASKED SINGER

- 5405 | Snowball ... Vocal
| Thanks (From Film "Too Much Harmony") ... Vocal

JOE LOSS and his BAND at THE KIT-CAT RESTAURANT, LONDON

- 5407 | It's the Talk of the Town ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain
| You've Got Everything ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain
5408 | Blue Moments ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain
| Swingy Little Thingy ... Fox-Trot

MADAME TUSSAUD'S DANCE ORCHESTRA

Directed by STANLEY BARNETT

- 5409 | Wild Geese Chase ... Hot Fox-Trot
| Sophisticated Lady ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain

HOWARD FLYNN and his ORCH.

- 5410 | Dinner at Eight ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain
| Night and Day (from "Gay Divorce") ... Fox-Trot, Vocal Refrain

BEN MALONE and the GANG

- 5415 | The Wedding of the Grave-digger's
| Daughter (Parts 1 and 2) ... Comedy

A NIGHT AT THE OLD TIVOLI MUSIC HALL

Introducing

THE ACTUAL VOICES OF

G. H. CHIRGWIN
R. G. KNOWLES
JACK PLEASANT
JAY LAURIER
J. W. RICKABY
BILLY WILLIAMS
ARTHUR LENNARD
and
FLORIE FORDE
Compère

CHRISTOPHER STONE
No. 5604.

COMMODORE GRAND ORCHESTRA and ORGAN

Conductor—JOSEPH MUSCANT
Organist—HARRY DAVIDSON

- 5411 | My Moonlight Madonna ("Poem") ... Waltz, Vocal Refrain
| The Skaters ("Les Patineurs") ... Waltz

COMMODORE GRAND ORCH.

- 5412 | Suite Americana ... (Parts 1 and 2)

NEW MARGATE CONCERT ORCH.

Conductor: HERBERT LODGE

- 5413 | Petite Suite de Concert (Parts 1
and 2) ... Orchestral

FRED DOUGLAS and FRIENDS

- 5416 | I Took my Harp to a Party ... Humorous
| There are many Excuses for Drinking ... Humorous

USE EDISON BELL GOLD-
PLATED CHROMIC NEEDLES

Each needle plays up to 10 Records

1/- per box of 100

Edison Bell Record

10 inch
GOLD LABEL

16

EDISON BELL (1933), LTD., 143-147 ROSEBERY AVENUE, E.C.1

November, 1933

November 1933: the 'Winner' name has disappeared from records sold by Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. (but is retained on those sold by Decca).

An Edison Bell Television Corporation had been jointly proposed in May 1935 by Edison Bell International and Edison Bell (1933), along with "certain foreign interests" but this was not formed as a Receiver and Manager was appointed to Edison Bell International by its debenture holders on July 17th 1935.

In association with the British Empire Cancer Fund, Edison Bell (1933) in June 1935 produced a special disc which included the voice of Florence Nightingale, recorded by C.R."Johnnie" Johnston for Colonel Gouraud's Edison Phonograph Company of 1888-90. This was the first new record to be issued since the demise of the Edison Bell records six months previously.

The bill to Edison Bell from the advertising agency which promoted the discs, sales of which were described as "negligible", was for £2,000, which could not be met. The agency took Edison Bell to Court for settlement, which it secured. Edison Bell appealed and lost, and had to pay the costs of both actions and the settlement, which was put at £500. This litigation proceeded through the courts until March 1937.

On December 31st 1935 Edison Bell (1933) borrowed £1,750 from Nathan Cohen of the Geo. Cohen company, giving that gentleman a floating charge on all the company assets and future income. This money was partly used to repay an earlier debenture.

Nathan Cohen was repaid in July 1936 when the company borrowed £2,000 from the Beattie Trust Ltd., which received a similar debenture to N.Cohen's. A further £322 was borrowed from Langdale (London) Ltd. in October 1936, a part of an arranged loan of £500. This gave that company a second charge on the business, such as it was. That money was used in television experiments and an attempt to promote a television company. The money was all lost.

A plan formulated in 1937 to supply cheap records to chain stores resulted in a formal agreement after initial negotiations. £5,000 was contributed by Tube Investments Ltd., of which £1,693 was used to pay off a creditor who was seeking to put the company into liquidation. The agreement was not fulfilled - no records were ever sold to the chain stores, as far as is known (unless they were the Peacock's already mentioned?). No company could produce discs at chain store prices and show a profit.

Decca withdrew the 6d. Crown records which had been supplied to Woolworth's by Crystalate as soon as it took over that company's record business in March 1937. With the failure of the chain stores enterprise, the stocks and goodwill of Edison Bell (1933) were sold to another gramophone company (but which?) for £5,500. From here on Edison Bell became wireless dealers.

Now Tube Investments petitioned for the compulsory winding up of Edison Bell (1933) Ltd. The Beattie Trust had its loan repaid and, from continuing royalties, Mrs. Howard Flynn, the wife of the director, paid the interest on Langdale's debenture, which she had transferred to herself. On the strength of this debenture she then appointed a Receiver and Manager to the business on October 18th 1937.

The response to Tube Investments' petition was a compulsory winding up order and the appointment of a liquidator, obtained on March 14th 1938. Thus came to an end the businesses which had controlled the Edison Bell records during the previous 45 years and four months. The company was finally wound up on July 7th 1942.

Edison Bell Holdings Ltd., formulated in 1934, appears never to have been incorporated, but during 1941 an enterprise was trading from 22 Northumberland Avenue as Edison Bell Holdings. Not a Limited Company, they had gone from there by

October 1942.

A company had been formed on April 19th 1940, called Edison Bell records (England) Ltd. with a nominal capital of £100 and a registered office at City Gate House, Finsbury E.C.2. This was moved to E.M.I.'s office at Blyth Road, Hayes, Middlesex in July 1941. The two directors of the company held one share each and these were transferred one each to the Decca Record company and the Columbia Graphophone Co. Ltd. in January 1942. As far as I am aware, this company still exists today but probably does no business.

The latest use of Edison Bell matrices known to me appears to be those used on some discs labelled Royale, which were made and circulated in the U.S.A. circa 1940. Decca manufactured a few "19th Century Celebrity Series" discs in 1936, dubbed from early cylinder recordings. The one of Florence Nightingale had a modern documentary about her work, recorded by Dame Edith Evans and Freddie Grisewood, but these latter discs are obviously outside the general story of the Edison Bell discs proper.

I have been unable to trace the history and activity of the Edison Bell (Scotland) company.

FINIS

Author's Footnote:

I would be much obliged to our member Karlo Adrian of Denmark, who has a much deeper understanding than I of the history of Edison Bell, if he would forward any corrections or comments to my story of the Edison Bell records in Britain and perhaps, one day, he could let us have a history of the overseas activities of the Edison Bell companies operating as they did in continental Europe and in parts of the British Empire.

F.A.

Reviews

TALKING MACHINE MADNESS -- The Story of America's Early Phonograph Shows by Cheryl Bauer and Randy McNutt. (26pp., \$6 U.S. post paid). Hamilton Hobby Press, P.O.Box 455, Fairfield, Ohio 45014, U.S.A.

This little book looks at the years 1878-1900 when the cylinder phonograph was used by travelling exhibitors and showmen, and the days when machines could be hired rather than bought. It is also a contender for the shortest book on the subject of phonographs and the most expensive at 23 cents a page. It gives a reviewer no pleasure to express disappointment in something that fellow enthusiasts have taken time, energy and money to produce, but a sole chapter that covers the first fourteen pages, with the second half composed of reproductions of advertisements from catalogues

is hard to enthuse over. Perhaps I have missed the point of this little publication and the sort of market it is aimed at. A well-researched work of greater substance on the subject would surely be more to the point. George Frow.

A GUIDE TO COLLECTING HIS MASTER'S VOICE 'NIPPER' SOUVENIRS

Compiled by Ruth Edge and Leonard Petts
(EMI Music Archives, 311pp. soft covers: Price £6 + 50p. postage)

This long-awaited volume from the former and present EMI Archivists presents the first comprehensive study of gramophone ephemera. Although the book is confined to a single trade-mark, a vast number of products incorporate that trade-mark, which of course has been used by various companies world wide. Subjects include the original Barraud painting and the various copies (many of which have mysteriously disappeared), souvenir models of various kinds, HMV badges and brooches, gramophone accessories, trade-signs and other advertising material and just about any product you can think of in the context, apart from gramophones and records themselves.

The book is divided into nearly forty short chapters, making for a very easy-to-use reference work for the collector. Sometimes, the chapters are tantalisingly short: some more information on needle tins, for example would have been welcome, and this subject is possibly the most widely collected of all those in the book. However, this is not claimed to be a complete listing - indeed, looking at the size of the volume as it is, one wonders what sort of tome would be required to accommodate a truly complete catalogue.

The period covered is from 1899 to the present, and equal coverage is given to 'official' HMV/EMI/Victor products and to those modern souvenirs and reproductions which merely take the Nipper trade-mark as a decorative motif. (The present reviewer regards these latter-day products as of secondary interest from the collecting point-of-view, rather in the same way that special postage stamps issued for collectors seem hardly worth collecting.)

The authors are to be congratulated for including record albums, for too long despised by collectors (especially record collectors), and for advising on the collection of artist's originals of cartoons. No recent cartoons are reproduced in the book, incidentally, for the same reason that they do not appear in the pages of this magazine: namely, that they are subject to Copyright restrictions.

It was surprising to find the misuse of the word 'console' perpetuated in a work from so authoritative a pair of authors (how often has the distinction between a console cabinet with its horizontal proportions and the upright variety been pointed out in these pages? That the post-war cream-coloured record cleaning pads are made of plastic was news to this reviewer; the cream colouring is a coat of paint, often seemingly on a wood base.

Apart from its enormous scope (and it needs to be borne in mind that the subject is much more difficult to research than that of mainstream products such as records), the work is to be commended for treating this subject in a suitable light-hearted way: not with levity, but not with an excessive earnestness, either. This can so easily spoil the fun of collecting in an ephemeral field like 'Nipperie', as one of the authors calls it. It is easy to say that no collector should be without this or that book, but here, for certain, is one that it is hard to imagine any member of this Society not wishing to have on his bookshelf, and it is available from the Society Booklist. C.P.

THE B.B.C. WIRELESS MILITARY BAND, Conducted by B.Walton O'Donnell
(Band International Series - No. 2)

Obtainable from V.Elstow, The International Military Music Society, 14 Butlin Court, Newtown Road, Little Irchester, Wellingborough NN8 2EE (£5.95p. post paid).

This is the second of two l.p.s recently produced by the International Military Music Society, from 78s made over fifty years ago. It is devoted entirely to that excellent combination, the B.B.C. Wireless Military Band, recorded under its first conductor B.Walton O'Donnell.

The front of the record cover shows the band, comprising thirty-seven players, broadcasting from a B.B.C. studio and the back shows the three O'Donnell brothers, and has a survey of military band music and a short history of the B.B.C. Band. These are presented in four columns of small print giving much interesting information which concludes with some apt remarks about the pieces on the record. These are as follows:

Side A	Soldiers in the Park (Monckton)	Side B	Soldiers of the Queen.
	Overture 'Mireille' (Gounod)		'Faust' Ballet Music (Gounod)
	Lynwood March (J.Ord Hume)		Prairie Fire March (J.Ord Hume)
	Dance of the Tumblers (Rimsky-Korsakov)		March of the Dwarfs (Grieg)
	Le Reve Passe, march (Krier, Helmer)		Tancredi, Overture (Rossini)
	Slavonic Rhapsody No. 1 (Friedmann)		

A small criticism about the matrix numbers given against each item is that the 'W' or 'C' prefix usually given with Columbia matrices has been omitted. There is thus no indication of whether the recordings were made by the Western Electric or Columbia's own (Blumlein) system. (As a matter of fact, all the AX matrices were Western Electric apart from the Faust, and all the A (10-inch) recordings were by the Columbia system except for Mireille. This was given the wrong recording date, which was June 19th 1931, not 1933.) Incidentally, the two Ord Hume marches were arranged for recording by Charles Leggett, a fact not indicated on the the 78 labels or the original Columbia catalogues.

The B.B.C. Wireless Military Band, composed of some of the most proficient woodwind and brass players within these shores, was held by many to be one of the finest military band combinations in the world quite soon after its formation, B.Walton O'Donnell having quickly consolidated the chosen players into an artistic ensemble.

Until listening to this present disc, I was not conversant with the work of this Band but I must say I am delighted with the programme here presented as it brings out all the niceties and aspects of military band music which competent bands are expected to perform. The most rewarding items for my musical palette are the Slavonic Rhapsody, the Faust ballet music and the Tancredi overture.

The transfers have been made with quite an 'open' sound and are very near to the original '78' sound, which is how I like to have my transfers on l.p. The recording engineer was Lloyd Stickells.

Support for this venture will help to promote further transfers of military music from 78s. The next is to be devoted to the recorded work of the Grenadier Guards band. I shall be reviewing No. 1, 'The Vintage Military Band', in the near future. It is already available through the Society Booklist.

Frank Andrews

Regional Roundup

Mike Field

Both the June and July meetings of the East Fife branch were held at the home of Chris Hamilton. For starters, at the June event, Chris showed his collection of needle tins which, although modest, consisted of a variety of different designs, sizes, shapes and colours. As well as some which members had never seen, there were complete sets of Songster, HMV, Columbia and Golden Pyramid containers. For the main course, Chris gave a presentation of earliest recordings by well known artists. Since the purpose was to hear the best possible representation of the performers rather than the gramophone, acoustic equipment was discarded in favour of electronics. The programme included a 1903 Berliner of Edvard Grieg playing his own composition "Spring", Joseph Joachim, (violin) a pupil of Brahms, on a 1903 recording and Isobel Jay singing selections from Gilbert and Sullivan on a G&T of 1904. Other artists included Otto Klemperer (1929), 90 year old Simon Barer whose speed and skill were almost unbelievable and 89 year old Francis Printe (1928). Chris's historical research has proved invaluable to the compilation of many programmes and it is unfortunate that space limitations restrict the report to a brief resume which does not do justice to the effort required.

The July meeting was essentially a comparison of the results obtained from acoustic records made at the turn of the century using modern electrical equipment instead of contemporary acoustic gramophones. Jim Goodall reports that by manipulation of modern sophisticated electronics, surface hiss and tonal imbalance can be brought almost under control. In some cases, by selecting a stylus of suitable radius, the surface noise can be reduced to the level almost of that arising from the best quality electrically recorded discs while recordings of vocalists in particular can be given an almost lifelike quality. In an atmosphere of wonder and nostalgia, one can listen to the voices of people long gone and almost feel a presence singing there as large as life! However, with all the advances, modern equipment can not entirely eliminate that "Olde Worlde gramophone" sound of old acoustic recordings. Chris ended by playing some of his compact discs to which no acoustic machine (except perhaps Douglas Fitzpatrick's huge gramophone at Sheringham Hall) can hold a candle. The compact disc is (sic) indestructible, can give unlimited volume, total freedom from distortion or background noise and deliver the full frequency range. To the human ear the reproduction is perfection and what more can you ask for? What it cannot do is to evoke the nostalgia and emotional appeal of the acoustic gramophone which engender pleasant feelings and memories in so many devotees. Ah well, as someone once said - thats progress!

The June meeting of the Severn Vale branch was well attended after Lawrie Wilson's exhortations! The main event of the evening was a programme, by Lawrie, of Caruso favourites which resulted from a casual enquiry as to which Caruso record was the "best". To try and obtain a consensus, Lawrie contacted no less than 50 members and was surprised to find how little agreement existed. The maximum number who voted for a given recording was three and most titles attracted only one vote. He was also most surprised that no one opted for the 1907 "golden disc" Vesta la guibba. It was felt that such records should be played on an acoustic machine, but practicality dictated the use of a tape recorder although he did play one or two on a "money box" Junior Monarch brought along by Mike Field.

The final selection from so many possibilities was: "Una furtiva lagrima" (generally accepted to be a fine example of "bel canto", "Ombra mai fu" (Handels Largo), one from the so called Goodnight quartette from "Marti", "A vucchella", "Solenne in quest'ora", "Rachel" and finally "Parted" which is sung in English by Caruso using a phonetic aide memoire which itself is almost unintelligible. A fine effort Lawrie - many thanks!

= C O N V E N T I O N S =

The Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) held its annual conference this year at San Francisco State University, with more than 100 members attending from the U.S., Canada and Europe. Highlights included illustrated presentations on jazz and classical recording in the Bay area, early Edison recordings, the latest developments in optical and digital information storage at the Library of Congress and other archives, original cast recordings, early dramatic recordings, the commercial record industry in Memphis, and 1920s recording artists 'Wee' Willie Robyn and Edna Fisher (the latter appeared in person). A 1948 kinescope of an Arturo Toscanini television concert was screened, and there were tours of the Ampex Magnetic Recording Museum and two nearby record archives.

At the banquet there was a comic presentation on the "Newly discovered Caruso Brothers' Cylinders" (no-one knew he had a brother), and live entertainment by Paul Price's Society Orchestra playing original dance tunes from the 1910s and 1920s. The Guest Speaker was the philanthropist Lloyd E. Wrigler, whose generosity has made possible ARSC's Rigler and Deutsch Record Index, a giant, computerised listing of all the 78 rpm recordings held by the five largest public archives in the U.S. Rigler urged members to spread the word about the availability of this unique resource, and encourage use of the hundreds of thousands of recordings it makes accessible for the first time.

The next Conference will be held at New York City's Lincoln Center on April 17th-19th, 1986.

Back home, a Colloquium is being organised by the Institute of Electronic and Radio Engineers on the RECOVERY OF PERFORMANCES FROM HISTORIC RECORDS on September 27th 1985 at the Royal Institution, Abermarle Street, London W.I. This will be chaired by Professor Fellgett of the University of Reading, who we understand was one of the co-developers of the ambi-sonic ('surround sound') system.

The provisional programme is as follows:

1. G.Brock Nannestadt: Source, Criticism and Historic Recordings
2. Joe Pengelly: Technical and Subjective Replication of Archival Sound
3. J.R.T.Davies: Manual Methods
4. Peter Adamson: Noise Reduction and Equalisation of Acoustic and Electrical Recordings
5. Lloyd Stickells: Possibilities of Noise Reduction in the Digital Domain
6. G.Brock Nannestadt: Inverse Filtering of Acoustic Recording Horns
7. R. Parker (Australia): Title to be announced.

Details from: Conference Secretariat, IERE, 99 Gower St. London WC1E 6AZ (01-388 3071)

HOW LESTOCQ'S BABY WAS PHONOGRAPHED

(Extract from 'Tit-Bits', August 9 1890)

I have had very many interesting experiences connected with Edison's "latest" phonograph in this country, having been among the privileged few who have been identified with the introduction into Europe of this "marvellous scientific novelty".

But the most extraordinary experience was that of Monday, the 21st July, at the headquarters of the Phonographic Company in London.

A piece called "The Judge" is now running at Terry's Theatre in the Strand, and a baby and a baby's cry play a prominent part in it. Most babies cry, but it has hitherto been found impossible to control their squalling propensities. A happy thought, however, struck the well-known actor and stage-manager, Mr. Lestocq, that a real baby's cry, phonographically produced, would be the most satisfactory and realistic property the stage has yet possessed. After a few preliminaries, the suggestion was approved, and then came the consideration of the most essential factor of the scheme, Where was the baby? Lestocq looked despairingly around the office, as though a baby could be found in some scribe's desk, or that it would arrive in answer to strictly pious ejaculations in the shape of smothered prayers avowedly addressed to the guardian angels who "ever hover around the baby faces we love so well".

Then it occurred to Lestocq that he was married and that he had a baby - fancy a real actor having a real baby! - and that he would induce its mother to let it out of the care of the nurse, and he would then decamp with them both in a prosaic cab to the home of the phonograph. No sooner said than done, and as the affair "got wind", all those in the building who could possibly leave their posts assembled like a guard of honour to receive Lestocq and his baby. It is a pretty baby, too, just like Lestocq on a diminutive scale, but it was all smiles, and was as happy as a sunbeam and occupied in sucking nothing through a feeding bottle.

The audience in the presence of the baby became quite excited, but it was evident there would be a long wait before it cried. Of course everybody knew it would cry, and hoped that the handing it to a stranger would produce the desired result.

The phonograph is now quite ready, and the young operator is smiling in as pleasant a manner as is consistent with having charge of such a wonderful machine. The change of arms is made, but no cry comes. Then the baby is held in front of the machine, but still no cry. Time goes on, minutes seem hours, until, impatiently, Lestocq gently taps the child with his finger and says in ultra theatrical style, "You naughty girl." Oh, such a yell! "Bring her to the phonograph", cries the operator, "hold her down closer." Then as the everlasting and penetrating nah-nah-nah-n-a---h goes on, all present begin to feel they have been very cruel.

Lestocq is not acting now. He trembles like a leaf, a tall portly gentleman says, "I must go out of the room, this is cruel," and a young lady calls Lestocq "a most unfeeling thing." The operator gets nervous, too, and turns his head away, with the consequence that instead of holding the transmitting tube to the baby's mouth he finds that he is pressing it close to the child's foot. The nurse has shut her eyes, and when the machine has done revolving it is discovered that the business has so seriously affected the whole party, including the phonograph, that there is no record at all.

Now the baby laughs and crows, and trembling and mean feelings vanish, and the operator inserts another phonogram and boldly makes another attempt. Lestocq begins to feel mean again, and so do we all, but the baby being brought in front of the serpent-like transmitting tube, sets up a yell at once that startles and delights us. Real tears trickle down the infant's face, while in a vice-like grip the child is held before the phonograph. Its larynx continues to pour out domestic music for full five minutes.

The baby is taken to the other end of the room still crying. The phonograph is turned on, and then we get a duet of a kind that has never before in history been heard by human ears. The baby gets startled and looks around to see where the other baby is - for this particular baby "notices", if you please - and commences a series of smiles that restores our peace of mind and equilibrium, while Lestocq hurriedly excuses himself by saying "It's all in the cause of art." The baby is an infant phenomenon, and will be the youngest performer on any stage.

At seven o'clock that night the phonograph baby cried in the theatre so loudly that it could be heard in the remotest parts, bringing vivid recollections to the heart of many a paterfamilias, and supplying to the bachelor a foretaste of the "joys of wedded bliss."

(No author's name is attached to the above. It was found by a member who was kind enough to send it to the Editor of Hillandale. The Editor wishes to thank the member concerned, and to apologise for having forgotten his or her identity.)

[REDACTED]

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U.K. and Europe: £5.00 per annum

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All other countries (Sterling subscriptions, for Airmail): £7.50 per annum

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Yorkshire

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Victoria, Australia

C.Gracie, [REDACTED] Cavendish, Victoria 3408

London Meeting

MAY 28th 1985

The first part of the evening was taken up with a video film lent by Ruth Lambert, concerning the early days of recording. Leonard Petts showed one of the original Hayes recording rooms and close-up views of an acoustic recording machine. Among the many still photographs shown were various coloured posters advertising Gramophone Company products, as well as the original premises of the Company in Maiden Lane and pictures of Emil Berliner, Fred Gaisberg, the building of the Hayes works, and Francis Barraud.

Clips from vintage films included the electroplating processes for the making of record matrices, some of the record presses, and the cabinet-makers at work. There were demonstrations of gramophones and the assembling of radiograms. One or two scenes of early electrical recording sessions were shown, including singers such as Gigli and Chaliapin. The famous Abbey Road studios were shown, together with vintage film of Sir Edward Elgar at one of the inaugural sessions.

Keith Hardwicke and Leonard Petts were shown working on early recordings for issue on l.p., and the film ended with the abortive attempt in 1950 to find the remains of Nipper at Kingston-on-Thames.

The rest of the evening was taken up with favourite records from the collection of Len Watts - not entirely Pathe this time. Among conventional records were Old King Cole and Ding Dong Bell, sung by Peter Dawson on HMV ASI, also Dawson's version of Don Juan's Serenade: a record of a thrush taken in 1910: Harry Fay advertising Raleigh bicycles on a Rena record: Norman Allin in a Ketelby song with the composer conducting: a Battistini record from 1907, *Vieni meco sol di Rose*, from Ernani: The Language of Flowers suite conducted by Sir Frederick Cowen; and a G.&T. of Gus Elen, 'Wait till the Work Comes Round'.

Pathe records included Amoureuse Valse (Allier): At the Zoological Gardens (Thuillier): Coheco, an Alaskan Love Romance (Reeves): Bonnie Jean sung by Peter Dawson: The French Maid, sung by Stanley Kirkby and George Baker: Long Ago in Alcalá (Messenger) sung by Thorpe Bates: Ragtime Sea (Berlin) by George Lashwood: The Whistling Village by Arthur Melrose: and, to close the evening, the march Homeward Bound (Harwood).

JUNE 18th 1985

This was a celebration of a double diamond jubilee: the inception of the Western Electric recording system, and of the first electrical recording sessions by The Gramophone Company at Hayes. A selection of records from that period in 1925 was assembled, and two gramophones to play them: a 1923-5 model 125 with No.2 soundbox, gooseneck tone-arm and cast-iron horn and a 1925-6 Model 103 with No 4 soundbox, swan-neck tone-arm and folded sheet metal horn.

Guest and Merriman's experiments in Westminster Abbey in November 1920 using telephone equipment was the first commercially issued electric recording, and a copy of this was played.

Frank Andrews and Ruth Edge had researched the Gramophone Company's record-

ing activities from about five weeks before the advent of electrical recording to some four weeks afterwards. At the time, the system of matrix numbering ran consecutively regardless of diameter, but the 10-inch were prefixed by 'Bb' and the 12-inch by 'Cc' (Yy and Zz for the respective Zonophone issues). Some of the last acoustic spoken records were made during May 1925 by one L.St. Claire Gondrona, but were of Australian interest and not issued in England. By June 3rd a few recordings of Jack Hylton, The Savoy Orpheans and Cyril Newton had been issued, and on that date Peter Dawson made his last acoustic recording with Gerald Moore.

During the next few days several acoustic recordings were taken which included Astra Desmond, Jack Hylton, The Savoy Orpheans and Una Bourne. The mid-June supplements of HMV records included six titles made electrically by Victor, although no reference to the process was made. Acoustic recordings were still being made, one of the last issues being made in August. Towards the end of June many more electric recordings were being made, still including Jack Hylton and also the eccentric pianist Vladimir de Pachmann, but many takes were rejected.

The July 1925 supplement included only one electric recording, a Victor, but acoustic recording for Zonophone was still continuing. The first Hayes recorded electric of July 8th (a tennis instruction record) was on the August supplement. The next few days saw many rejects of electric recordings by Jack Hylton, Tudor Davies, Robert Radford, Evelyn Scotney and others, while Max Darewski was still recording acoustically on the piano for Zonophone.

By mid-July electrical recording had been going on for a month and new issues by the Savoy Orpheans, de Groot and Derek Oldham came along. The first electrically-recorded symphony was Tchaikowsky's No. 4, directed by Sir Landon Ronald, although Elgar's acoustic recording of his Second Symphony was not released until September.

Towards the end of July various band and choir recordings took place in the Hayes studios, but it was not until October 1925 that outside recordings were attempted (and a new matrix series started). Among the first were a choir recording in a church at St. John's Wood and an organ record taken in the Kingsway Hall. The way was now laid for many outside recordings in 1926, and the first supplement to mention electric recordings was that of May 1926.

Throughout the lecture examples of most of the recordings mentioned were played. These had been supplied by various Members and the two gramophones belonged to the Chairman. Many thanks to all these and in particular to Frank Andrews and to Ruth Edge for their many hours of research.

London Reporter

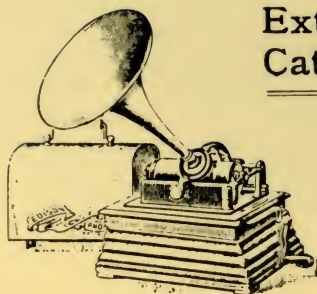
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Official Journal of the City of London Phonograph & Gramophone Society
(founded 1919)

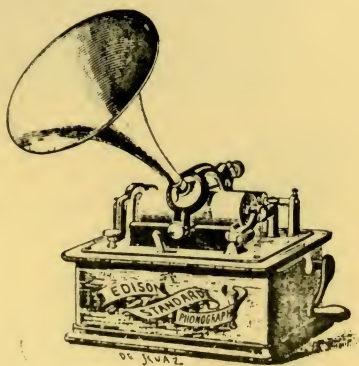
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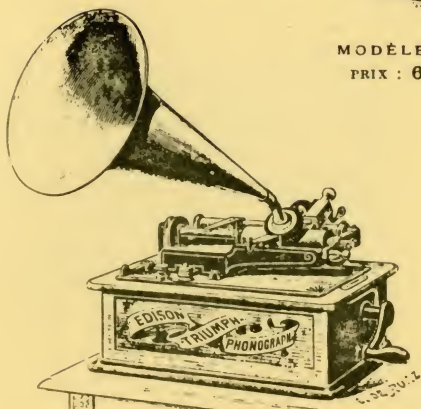
Extrait du Catalogue Machines



MODÈLE "GEM"
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MODÈLE "STANDARD"
PRIX : 125 FRANCS



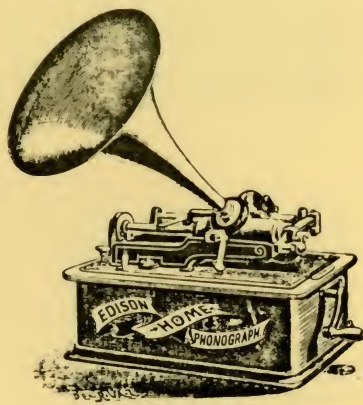
MODÈLE "TRIUMPH"
PRIX : 310 FRANCS

1906

PHONOGRAPHS



MODÈLE "VICTOR" — PRIX : 370 FRANCS



MODÈLE "HOME"
PRIX : 185 FRANCS

